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THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 17, 1855.

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EDITORS of newspapers who have noticed THE CRAYON will please send us marked copies.

SPECIMEN numbers will be sent to all who may request them.

Sketchings.

WE are persuaded that we cannot make a better use of our "Sketchings" room than by giving our readers the thoughts of those who unpretendingly and informally send us their reveries and expressions of true feeling for the world around them. We shall avail ourselves of all such communications, and if some of our friends find themselves unexpectedly "in print," we feel sure they will not regret it or reproach us with breach of confidence.

DEAR FRIEND,—When the sunshine drips through the few pale leaves that tenaciously cluster on the grey bough, when children bury themselves in the drifts of crisped brown leaves, playing "Babes in the Wood," and with such pretty glee toss the withered heaps from their rosy faces, and stretch their dimpled arms from the mimic burial,—when it is a luxury for spiders to creep out and try a silken turn in the sun,—when a warm sand-bank invites to slumbrous contemplation, and an almost forgotten glory comes back to the water and the hills,—when little birds chirp out again some sweet summer refrain,—when the kitten watches in the sun-shine a revived fly,—when Nature's heart grows warm again, and thrills to yours and mine, dear friends,—then we take pencils, or pen and paper it may be, or a book, and find a spot in some sunny hollow.

But when seated in a half-shadow of interlaced branches, when our ink-stand is safely lodged under a broad spotted leaf, and the white sheet is opened for a picture of the scene in words or pencil strokes—when the dear poet's hallowed rhymes are before us,—still the eye wanderingly counts the fibres of a leaf, or watches the adventures of a little bug, or vaguely looks into the restless stream.

It seems that external and visible characteristics of scenery and circumstance are not the only attractions that govern man in his choice of local habitation; but a secret force in nature corresponding to his degree of development, draws him and holds him silently in his place. The severely symmetrical, the rounded, graduated Puritanic look of New England hills, could hold no people on their sterile sides but the unflinching, practical, positive Yankee: he finds a stubbornness answering his will in the ribs of the old hills, and he subdues it with cheerful heroism, making it blossom like river-banks of California—with yellow gold—and better still, with virtues of patriotism and social life.

But what poet or artist could live in the stereotyped white house, the undeviating picket fence, the always receding hills, the corresponding old, dull, correct round of occupation and behavior, that make the very distinctive and saving quality of that soil and people?

Who, again, settle in the fertile marshes and rich plains of the West and South? Only those whose aim is to gratify the sensual appetites at the lowest cost; those only can live there who are materialistic, unspeculative and weak. The hills and rolling prairies invite the greater souls with fresh breezes, and magnificent sweep of

view, with their broad streams and oceans of flowers.

One soul will find beauty and attraction in its corresponding spot of earth, where another would pine and die in its secret forces of "od" antagonisms,—no vital influences emanate from the earth, no circles of harmony embrace the strange, the wandering spirit, and no force of material circumstance should hold it from fleeing away. Many a beautiful life has prematurely wilted and died for want of its appropriate place on mother earth's bosom.

Carlisle says something about reading man's thought in his deed. Is not his character read also by his home, in the deformity or beauty that shall hem in his personal and near surroundings. And still more closely may it be read by him who shall discover the silent, secret nature of the forces that bind the life and soul of some in an invisible chain to certain localities, and repel others; that well up life to one heart, and dry up life in another.

Involved in this idea is the history of one of our most distinguished American artists, a man around whom nature has built a wall of majesty, that warns the feeble or mean soul, to come "thus far and no further"—a man of most gentle and child-like susceptibilities, and yet so sublime and reverent in conceptions of divine truth, so illuminated by inborn genius, that his silent look is an awe to pretension and falsehood; but the kindest beacon light to the seeker after truth and wisdom.

I look on this man with perpetual wonder. Truly that the rocks should open and let gentle flowers from out their clefts, "emanations of an indwelling life, an upholding love," is not more wonderful than that from out a vigorous New England village, an uncompromisingly stiff neighborhood where the whole law and gospel of life, is to work hard to "get a livin'," and the summit of glory to have the reputation of being "hard-working people," and "forehanded;" where pedlars sprout spontaneously, and Art is a thing unknown, or vaguely hinted at in decorative sign-painting, and supposed to culminate in a baby's portrait that "looks as handsome as a doll," that among sterling, sturdy farmers should arise one whose earliest thoughts and dreams stretched far over and beyond his native hills, whose feeling for beauty and worship of truth lifted him far above the sordid confines of his material life, and linked him with past ages—this is one of nature's wonders that baffles the laws of philosophy.

"That magnificent gulf that lets one down from hills among the clouds, and leads to the quiet haunts of men—do you remember it, Mr. —?"

"That is the road that I used to go to mill," he quickly replied, just raising his electric eye from his drawing.

Looking at his wonderful head and eyes, and with his expressive fullness of gentle tones still making all manner of pleasantness in my ear and brain, I at once pictured a solitary boy, with rusty cloth cap, heavy shoes, and brown hands, driving the old family horse and wagon, with bags of grain, down the twilight rocky road that led through what the people called the "gully." I imagined how his eye ranged over the imposing altitude of the trees, caught tricks of light and shade, that none but the inborn painter sees, from banks of sun-lit moss, or among the stones that tried to hem in the dancing brook. I imagine what a religious reverence stole into his heart for God, for nature, and for himself—and that then there followed a feeling of utter solitude, a conviction of native ability beyond the demands of the time and place in which he lived, a presentiment that excited and averted his heart—then, just then, I imagine the rustle of the wind in the tops of the trees, and the louder gurgling laugh of the brook arrest his senses, and put to flight the ghosts of coming years—more especially a trout-betraying

wimple, in still waters confined by a mossy log, entraps his imagination, and the next I see of the boy-artist, he stands by the brook with an improvised hook and line in his hand, whisking a trout into the leaves of the overhanging laurel, while the horse dozes comfortably in the quiet road.

But the laws of this boy's inner being forced him necessarily away from the place of his birth, to which he could not gravitate, like less gifted minds—they forced him away from the utilitarian projects nursed by his friends, to fetter his young years; and with the stigma of reckless unthrift upon him, he took up his destiny in rather a vagrant guise, to be sure, but, nevertheless, rigorously following every hint and hope of his "high calling."

It is singular that elements of beauty, so foreign to the principles of his native institutions and home-bound hills, should have spanned his nativity, and have been so embodied in both his ideal and physical nature. Was there not in the wilderness of maternal love some secret fountain of poetic beauty, to which these manly perfections gratefully ascribe their source?

Would this honor, at least, might belong to "Woman's Rights," the high prerogative of transmitting to children their birth-right of beauty—that grace and truth that man's political strife and care burns up, both root and branch!

But is it not still more singular, that the first waking appreciation of the high endowments of such a mind never stirs the dull senses of common communities? A man with the clustering honors of distant lands thick upon him, coming into sordid spheres, is disrobed of his greatness at once, is dwarfed to the comprehension of his neighbors. Nay, more than this, his powers are drawn from him, abstracted by the inferior souls around him, so that without most diligent refreshing from inspiring sources, his own life runs dry; he even takes upon himself first, the airs and manners of inferiors, then the feelings. Therefore, the spirit wars violently against this insidious subjugation; it labors unceasingly to throw its best fruits where they will be gathered reverently and preserved for the glory and hope of humanity.

But, adieu to the Artist! I did not essay when I lounged on this bank of earth, to run my profane pen into the flying car of fame, and drag one of its occupants down to the earth for dissection—this little white ant, with its translucent body, that is voyaging over my paper, comes more within the scope of my small vision.

Yet, "when comes the mild, warm day as still such days will come," when every feeling is melted into kindness in the sunshine, and pens as well as feet are tempted to ramble, a "song" may be forgiven, as in Burns's epistle to his friend, if it does "turn out a sermon."

But assuming a preacher's style, I would draw from the above the following conclusions: *First*, That earth and man act and react magnetically on each other.

Secondly, That childhood should be treated reverently, not knowing but its strange ways are dictated by the inspiration of angels.

Thirdly, That genius is a law unto itself.

Fourthly, That it can receive righteous judgment only from its peers.

Fifth, and lastly, There is logic somewhere in the above, if only the dangling threads can be brought together.

Yours truly,
K.

WE love our policemen, or, perhaps, it would be better to say, we love their appearance. In the new uniform, a policeman strikes us, every time we encounter one, as a very gentlemanly, good-looking person—clean, orderly, and respectable. He inspires us with confidence; we are willing to trust our lives and property to his care, and feel that his watchful eye is ever

scanning the horizon, to detect the pirates floating about to prey upon our social life. We feel so, particularly when we catch his eye, but we are not afraid to meet it. The policeman of New York has one characteristic which we have not remarked in the police of London or Paris, and which with him is to the manor born—proceeding from a trait common to the Yankee nation—he is especially attentive to ladies, and his attentions are given with a degree of politeness which Monsieur himself could not fail to admire. We have seen a policeman consume—that is the word for a fast people, otherwise we should say devote—five minutes of time in convoying a lady across the street. He waits patiently until loaded carts pass by—for he is discreet, and stops not business; and he is also humane, knowing that a heavily-laden horse, plodding along his weary way, labors less than when obliged repeatedly to stop, and strain every muscle to resume his onward course. But, an omnibus! with a look that cannot be mistaken, and which we fancy our omnibus horse is grateful for, he commands the vehicle to stop; the driver looks daggers—but that is all—he, too, with a fellow-feeling of national politeness, is quite resigned when he sees the man of authority trip across with a lady to the opposite curb-stone. If the omnibus-man does appear a little cross, we are inclined to forgive him, for we have seen his patience terribly tested. But, the ladies—thank God!—are not a fast people; and, if they sometimes cause the omnibus-man to wait, we chuckle, and pardon them for their ignorance of fast principles. Would not Charles Lamb have believed in modern gallantry, if he could have lived in our midst? But, this is a digression. We come back to our first sentence. We love the policeman—and now we think ourselves authorized to say so, because we believe we have proved that he is entitled to our love—for his care of the ladies. By-the-by, the term ladies is partial, exclusive; we ought to say females. We have seen the policeman as attentive and as careful of the sewing-girl—the beggar woman and the colored woman—all honor to him for it—as we have to the silks and satins which envelop the same forms, but enshrine no better hearts. We mean to use the policeman—we mean to get lost, in order to ask him to direct us to a certain place—and in this way practise him—but we shall do it respectfully; we shall touch our hat as we would to any gentleman, and we shall thank him as kindly. We would advise our friends to aid us in the same way; and we propose a conspiracy, the object of which shall be to render the policeman proud of his duty, and the city proud of its watchful and good-looking guardians.

We copy, by permission, the following, from a letter to the lady of one of our leading artists, by the purchaser of one of his pictures. Next to having painted a good picture is the pleasure of having it so appreciated and bestowed:—

"I cannot resist the temptation of writing to you, although I may not hope to express a tithe of what I feel in looking on the beautiful prophecy of earth redeemed and purified embodied in Mr. —'s picture, just received.

"I can only say that my whole heart is grateful to the author of such a monument to purity and truth.

"Mr. — and I sit on the sofa opposite the picture in silence, except when one points out to the other some new beauty. The exalted and holy calm which pervades it, so involuntarily steals over the beholder that I cannot think any one could harbor a sinful thought in his heart while gazing upon it. I am sure it must have blessed Mr. — in its creation; may it bless us and ours in its contemplation; may we, indeed, learn the lesson it so beautifully can impart."

BROWN'S WASHINGTON.

To the Editors of *The Crayon*:

DEAR SIRS,—Have I misunderstood your language, or do you intend to suggest that Mr. Brown, in modelling his Statue of Washington, has selected a particular moment in the life of his hero, and represented him as performing a definite action?

Would not such a selection limit and belittle that expression of character which is the aim of Sculpture?

Would it not interfere with the suggestion of all those great qualities of the full and rounded manhood which required more than a life of heroic effort for their manifestation, but which in repose, as well as in labor, spoke in the mien, port and presence of the hero, and drew to him the admiring confidence of his contemporaries?

Washington the Soldier, the Statesman, the Patriot, is less impressive than Washington the Man.

Has not Mr. Brown endeavored to represent the Man equal to any event, not at the moment engrossed with, or descending to, a particular historical act?

We did not intend to be understood as limiting the expression of the statue referred to, to a moment of *time*, but rather to a phase of the development of the Hero's character. We are unable to say if Mr. Brown intended even this; but on the principle of criticism, that a work of Art is entitled to the credit of all the thought that it suggests, we gave this statue credit for all we found in it. But, after all, the distinction is non-essential; for if, as our correspondent suggests, it was Washington the MAN whom the artist endeavored to represent, we were right, for the passage from the soldier's life to the statesman's was that in which the MAN stood alone—the trappings of the warrior only remaining as the warrior's glory did to his name. Of the artist's intention in the statue, we again say, we do not know anything, having never considered it necessary to ask the question. There is, however, in our correspondent's letter, one expression which we must notice—"descending to a particular historical act." We do not understand that a man *descends* when he performs a particular act, so long as the aim of the act is to realize the elevation of himself or others.

MESSEURS. EDITORS:—In your review of Mr. Leutze's picture last week, you were, it seems to me, unnecessarily severe, and hardly exercised the "charity" I had expected, from the general tone of the *CRAYON*. Were there not excellences enough in the picture to justify more praise than was awarded it? I will not judge even your judgments, but it does seem to me that a desire to find more good in it, would have led to a modification of your judgment. There seemed to me to be much fine painting in it, at least, though as to the general merits of the picture, I do not think you are far wrong; yet, should we not follow Mr. Sealey's advice, and "make the best of it; not the worst."

There may be justice in our correspondent's stricture, though the fault, perhaps, lay more in not expressing our approbation of the good parts more strongly than we did our disapprobation of the unsatisfactory whole. That there is good painting in the picture we admitted, and admit it still more forcibly, if desired; but it seems to us that the picture must be judged not by its parts, but by the fitness of the parts to the whole. There is most admirable painting of dresses throughout, and if Mr. Leutze had given us only the pool, with the dog rushing into it, and the figure at the right dipping his hat into the water, he would have deserved better from the world than he would from a gallery of such complete pictures. If we did him injustice in our review, we regret it more than any one else can, but we still think we were right in considering the picture in question no "addition to our Art treasures," since there seems so much more to regret than to admire, that the impression given by the whole must ever be one of pain and the mission of Art is to give delight.

How shall we settle the question whether the railroading facilities of the age are, indeed, an advance in the true life? There *was* something pleasant in stage-coaching. Having occasion to go into the interior of the State last summer, out of the usual line of travel, we took the top of a stage-coach. It was just at sunset, in August, and the road lay along the Ausable, a rocky, rapid river, shut in by hills. It was a lonely road, and as the twilight came on, and the blue hills became purple, and then deeper, until lost in one mass almost black, there shone out one star from the pale, green sky. The sky darkened as the sunlight faded, and the star shone out clearer and clearer, and then timidly and with quivering red light, came out the lesser stars one by one. Then, a turn in the road brought us in view of some distant, lurid brush-fires burning on the hill-tops, red and flickering beneath the starlight. We were disposed to be solemn, and were thinking of things not found by the roadside, when we passed two little girls, bare-footed and wrapped both in one shawl, singing together,

"There is a happy land, far, far away,"

with childish voices, not in the least heeding the stage as it passed them, but, with arms mutually embracing and keeping step to their hymn, sung until we could hear no more for the distance. This was a voice of the night, which we hope never to forget, and for which we thank the stage-coach.

FINE ART GOSSIP.

THE fountains which form part of the design for the new cattle market in Copenhagen Fields are a curious proof of the increased refinement of the age. Shades of departed butchers, imagine a fountain in Smithfield!

THE *Shrewsbury Chronicle* announces the destruction, by an accident—which has all the character of a piece of poetical injustice—of several valuable paintings, by some of the most celebrated masters, the property of John Naylor, Esq., of Leighton Hall, Montgomeryshire. Our readers will recollect that in order to enhance the interest attaching to the opening of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, and to provide an additional pleasure for the members of the British Association, Mr. Naylor kindly lent several paintings, valued at nearly £20,000, for exhibition in that building. To prevent the possibility of an accident by railway, it was determined to send the paintings by a road-van from Liverpool to Leighton. Mr. Grundy, of Liverpool, was intrusted with the package. On Friday, the 24th ult., they were started off, and arrived safely, the same afternoon, at the level crossing at Gobowen (Oswestry) Station, on the Shrewsbury and Cheshire Railway. The gates having been opened, contrary, it is said, to the regulations, about the time the 3 o'clock train from Chester was due, the van attempted to cross. In passing over, by some means or other, the wheels became entangled in the gate, which caused some delay; and, while they were endeavoring to get the vehicle off the line, the train came up and dashed into it, completely smashing the van, and tearing the paintings (or, at least, the greater portion of them) into very bits. The horses in the van. The horses in the van escaped unhurt, it having been torn away from them. The train was delayed for a considerable time. It is said, the loss to Mr. Naylor by this unfortunate accident is estimated at from £12,000 to £14,000. It is a loss, too, which no mere cash remuneration can ever remedy.

A SITE, near Wokingham, has been selected for the Wellington College. Mr. Gibson has given twelve acres, and has sold one hundred more, at a low price, to the Governors. The site adjoins the Reigate and Reading branch of the South-Eastern Railway, and is about two

miles from Sandhurst. It is nine miles from Windsor, and within sight of Strathfieldsaye.

THE Manchester Exhibition of Modern Paintings is closed; and the *Guardian* tells the instructive story of the year:—

"The Exhibition opened this year on Monday, the 4th of September, and closed on Saturday, the 2d of December inst. This period includes 78 working days, of which the Exhibition was open during 72 days at 1s., and during the last week, six days, at 6d. Then, during 30 evenings, it was open to the working classes at 2d. Of course, no account is kept of the number of visits of the governors of the institution and the privileged members of their families. Then, by the kindness and liberality of the directors, several schools were admitted free; and of these the numbers are not stated. These were the pupils of the Manchester School of Art, the drawing classes of the Manchester Mechanics' Institution, the children of the Deaf and Dumb School (whose visit was a most interesting one—the lively, intelligent countenances of the children of both sexes, and the rapidity with which they conversed on their fingers respecting the merits of various pictures, attracting the attention of all the other visitors to the gallery), the boys of Chetham's Bluecoat School, and the girls of the Jubilee Charity School. In addition, then, to all these, the numbers admitted during the 78 days and evenings at the prices stated, were—

72 days, at 1s. 6,086 admissions.
6 days, at 6d. 1,050 ditto.
30 evenings, at 2d. 21,249 ditto.

Total paid admissions.... 28,385

"There are still to be added 149 season tickets, at 5s. each; and, of course, all the exhibiting artists have the *entrée*, so that at a very moderate computation, more than 30,000 persons must have visited the Exhibition in the short space of six weeks! The most cheering features of these figures is the vast number of persons who have thronged the exhibition during the evening; and the interest taken in it is still further shown by the sale of 9,000 catalogues. On the average, there must have been upwards of 700 persons present on each of the 30 evenings. The last night the gallery was much crowded,—no fewer than 1,703 persons paying for admission that evening. On many evenings the gallery had been more or less crowded; yet we are assured, and to us the fact brings no surprise, as it confirms all that we have said as to the conduct and demeanor of the people if rightly treated,—that, without exception, the demeanor of these crowds of working classes has been most orderly and satisfactory. Not a single case of intoxication had been observed; and we have heard of no instance of damage being sustained by any work of Art, notwithstanding the pressure at times consequent upon crowded rooms. One severe test of behavior accidentally arose. One evening, when the rooms were crowded, the gas went suddenly out. There could not have been fewer than a thousand persons present, all of whom remained quietly in their places for a full quarter of an hour, until the chandeliers could be relighted, amusing themselves and each other with a few good-humored remarks, and some jokes and displays of that peculiar mother wit, for which the people of Lancashire are so remarkable."

M. BEGAS, a Prussian painter, who was considerably esteemed at Berlin, and some of whose portraits (in particular the likeness of M. Meyerbeer) have been largely circulated in an engraved form, died recently, aged sixty years.

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(To be continued.)

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